

Chapter 5 - Next Steps

As noted at the beginning on this document, the SHC concept was unanimously adopted by the North Carolina Board of Transportation on September 2, 2004 as a part of the Statewide Transportation Plan. Adoption and inclusion of this concept in the Statewide Plan was the result of a continuous and collaborative effort of NCDOT management and staff, BOT members, and other partner agencies. Building on the cooperation and momentum in jointly developing the SHC concept, the Secretaries from NCDOT, NCDOTC, NCDENR, and the Governor signed the Strategic Highway Corridors Policy Statement (Exhibit 33) endorsing the concept in December 2004. This statement focuses on the three primary themes of the concept: Mobility and Connectivity, Economic Prosperity, and Environmental Stewardship (as discussed in Chapter 2). Additionally, all projects on Strategic Highway Corridors have been noted in the 2006-2012 TIP further recognizing the importance of the concept. With the adoption and endorsement of the concept, this effort can now be referred to as the Strategic Highway Corridors initiative.

The next steps in carrying the SHC initiative forward are to act upon the items discussed in Chapter 4. To assist with the implementation process, particularly the education component, NCDOT has created the Strategic Highway Corridors Brochure, as shown in Appendix D. Successful implementation of the items requires a multi-agency partnership in place to work collaboratively and cooperatively to overcome and resolve issues and challenges that might arise. *It is important to note that these items and the Vision Plan will be implemented over time with no anticipated completion date.* While education is the first task that should be fully implemented, action on the other items should occur in a parallel manner. Resources will need to be identified for implementing each task, including personnel and funding for developing and preparing corridor studies, managing access (in terms of driveway permits and traffic signal installations), and corridor protection. Other items, which may be initiated in conjunction with this effort, include:

- Changing North Carolina General Statutes to follow through on some of the implementation objectives
- Coordinating long-range planning efforts for future interstate corridors with FHWA and regional and local entities
- Developing related guides and standards (not mentioned in Chapter 4), including Access Management and/or Interchange guidelines and standards
- Introducing new TIP projects to help achieve the adopted vision for a corridor. These may stem from CTPs, corridor studies, and/or requests from MPOs, RPOs, or BOT members.

It is also proposed that any suggested modifications to the Vision Plan be evaluated in concert with future Statewide Transportation Plan updates. Additionally, *it is important to note that this initiative is a tool to provide better and consistent planning and design decisions on key highway facilities in North Carolina.* This initiative currently is not proposed to affect project funding or the way projects are prioritized.

This report is the first major piece to describe the development of the SHC concept. A future critical task is the documentation of the selection and characteristics of each Corridor. This will serve many purposes including: justification for inclusion of the facility as a Corridor, information for Purpose and Need and Problem Statements, and information for the development of recommendations for future corridor studies. Individual Corridor documentation will include the role of the Corridor in the overall transportation system, the activity centers which the Corridor connects, the level of developmental and vehicular growth along the Corridor, and other items of notable importance. Continued documentation of all activities, tasks, decisions, and other items of notable importance, is essential during the evolution of this initiative for future decision-makers, engineers, planners, and other stakeholders.

NCDOT has created a website for the Strategic Highway Corridors initiative located at <http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/tpb/shc> (see Exhibit 32). This site provides a comprehensive and dynamic resource for all information related to the initiative including all corridor studies and projects. As the initiative continues to evolve, the Strategic Highway Corridors website will be updated with the latest activities and documents.

Exhibit 32: Strategic Highway Corridors Website





mobility & connectivity
economic prosperity
environmental stewardship

POLICY

It is the policy of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Commerce and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources to recognize and further study a set of Strategic Highway Corridors. These Corridors, as identified and described in the Strategic Highway Corridors Concept Report, articulate a new planning focus for North Carolina. They represent a tool to enhance the mobility function of critical highway facilities and provide an opportunity for each Agency to proactively partner with stakeholders and the public to consider long-term vision, consistency in decision-making, land use partnerships, and overarching design and operational improvements.

The Strategic Highway Corridors concept represents the first major implementation step to be advanced under the update of North Carolina's Long-Range Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan. Consistent with the Plan's 25-year investment direction, Strategic Highway Corridors recognizes the need to improve and maximize the use of a distinct set of existing highways. These Corridors are critical to statewide mobility and connectivity and promote a vision of modern, efficient transportation supportive of economic opportunities and environmental excellence.

Adopted by the North Carolina Board of Transportation September 2, 2004

PURPOSE

Promote statewide economic prosperity and support the department's environmental stewardship goals

Preserve North Carolina's taxpayer investment in critical highway corridors

Enhance major corridor mobility within and to destinations just outside North Carolina

Enhance connectivity of intrastate and interstate travel

Partner with stakeholders and all vested Agencies to create an up front vision for each Corridor

*Identify a desired facility type for each Corridor as
Freeway, Expressway, Boulevard, or Thoroughfare*

Influence Systems Planning, Funding, Project Planning, Design, Access Management, and Local Land Use decisions along Corridors to achieve broader goals

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